No. 3

BULLETIN

OF THE

UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES

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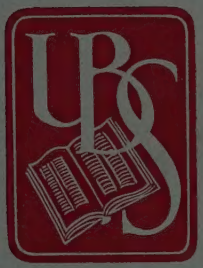

1950
THIRD QUARTER

146, QUEEN VICTORIA STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.

UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES

A WORLD FELLOWSHIP OF BIBLE SOCIETIES.

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UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES

BULLETIN

THIRD QUARTER - 1950

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Editorial

THIS present issue of the *Bulletin* deals with four main aspects of Bible Society news. The first section gives a report on the meeting of the Standing Committee which took place in the second week of June. The Council of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES had decided last year that it would not hold a meeting this year, and remitted to the Standing Committee the responsibility for dealing with current matters and with any problems arising, which might need to be settled before the next meeting of the Council.

The Rev. H. M. Arrowsmith, General Secretary-Elect of the B.F.B.S. in Australia, who is spending several months in Great Britain, was invited to attend the gathering. He gives us here his impressions as a newcomer to UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES' life. Our President, Bishop Berggrav, was also present at the meeting and his contributions to the discussions were most valuable. He opened the meeting with a short meditation and in order to share this with you, we have reproduced it as an introduction to this issue of the *Bulletin*.

The second section brings, as usual, news flashes from all over the world on events related to the production, circulation and study of the Bible. We are glad to be able to complete this review by more extensive information on the situation in Japan by the Rev. Dr. E. M. North, and also by glancing with Mr. J. H. Twentyman and the Rev. Y. B. Im at the situation in the countries where they are at work. In collating these news items and articles, we have been struck by the repeated instances of the missionary power of the Scriptures and of the importance of closer co-operation between Bible Societies, churches, missionary societies and other groups in present-day evangelistic efforts. While the traditional and somewhat individualistic method of door-to-door Bible colportage seems to have been definitely brought to an end in several countries, at the same time the churches are becoming conscious of their missionary responsibilities and are discovering the importance of the Bible in evangelistic work, and it will be for the Bible Societies to see what their part can be in this evolution and how they can strengthen and develop within these evangelistic movements an awareness of the importance which should be given to the Scriptures, if such efforts are not to burn up like straw and rapidly become sterile.

For this reason, and in view of the discussion which will take place at the U.B.S. regional meeting in Vienna next September, when the problem of colportage to-day will be studied, we have introduced in the third place extracts from a study presented by Mr. René Cruse, a colporteur-evangelist at work in Mulhouse (France), to a regional Church meeting last year. Mr. Cruse explains here his personal solution concerning the place of colportage in the life of the Church, as he has experienced it, and in doing this he helps us to define the terms of the problem.

Finally, we reproduce extracts from an article written recently by the new Chairman of the *Evangelische Haupt-Bibelgesellschaft zu Berlin*, Dr. O. Söhngen. Since the end of the war, and I think we may also say, without conceit, since the creation of the U.B.S., many Bible Societies—especially on the Continent of Europe—have been led to reconsider their methods of working and the *raison d'être* of a Bible Society. The war and post-war periods have made the churches suddenly and profoundly conscious of the advanced state of dechristianisation in Europe. The old routine of circulating the Scriptures through the churches and through Christian " works " does not, in many cases, reach those who remain outside of the Church, and the Bible Societies need to enter the field again. Dr. Söhngen indicates the lines along which he considers that the Bible Societies in Germany should again begin to function. The reader will notice that Dr. Söhngen does not mention the possibility of activity outside the borders of his own country. This is perhaps due to the fact that the responsibility of the E.H.B. lies with Bible work in Eastern Germany ; and although we may think that one of the main responsibilities of a Bible Society is the missionary circulation of the Scriptures abroad, we have to remember that such an activity is at present impossible for Societies working behind the iron curtain, and that such Societies have enough problems to solve in trying to develop missionary activity within their own borders.

These lines go to the printer at the moment when news has come through of the occupation of Seoul by North Korean forces. It is impossible to see how the situation will develop there, but we think with special affection and concern in these days of our friends of the *Korean Bible Society*, and particularly of Mr. Young Bin Im, whom so many of us have met or heard, and whose contribution in this issue gives us such insight into the part played in Korea by the Bible and the Bible Society and into the unlimited task which lies ahead of the young *Korean Bible Society*.

We shall remember Mr. Im, his family, his colleagues and his friends in our prayers, as we shall also remember all those at work with the Bible Societies behind the iron curtain, who have so many problems to overcome. May I also suggest that we give a special place in our intercessions to those, like Mr. Twentyman, who are working under difficult conditions in South America, and in other strongly Roman Catholic countries, where many obstacles are put in the way of a free circulation of the Bible.

Lastly, let us remember the world-wide task of the Bible Societies. At present, they fall short of the demands made upon them : the number of literate adults in the world increases annually by about 25 millions ; the annual production of Scriptures, even taking into account commercial production and circulation by other groups than the Bible Societies, does not run into many more than 20 millions. Evangelism is becoming one of the main concerns of the churches, and on the mission field and in the younger churches, a revival of the missionary spirit and drive is making itself felt. Let us therefore pray that the Bible Societies may find the necessary support, to be able to help in these new developments, and to offer to all those who are touched by this movement, the Book through which God will speak to them and make them stand firm in their faith.

EARTHEN VESSELS

(Introductory meditation to the Matlock conference of the Standing Committee of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES)

EIVIND BERGGRAV

" For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthern vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

II Corinthians IV, 6-7.

WHEN, in my early years as a pastor, I read these verses, I was consoled by the phrase " earthen vessels." I had very soon had to confess to myself that I was not the *adequate man* for God's message. All of you may have had a feeling like this—from time to time, or often, or always—the feeling that you are quite inadequate to fulfil the idea of a servant of the Gospel. And then it was a consolation to have the confirmation of Holy Scripture that we are but earthen vessels.

But I was wrong—that was not at all the point. I saw that later, and now I can never look at these verses without being heartened, although not " consoled," or rather satisfied with my own status. The real point is that there is a light shining in the darkness, shining in our hearts, which must be seen by other men. In our Norwegian version the wording reads more like this : " that God's glory may radiate forth from us."

I feel condemned by this word, for I know that what is said is not true of me. I am more a cloud than I am a sunbeam. And you, my friends, may sometimes have had the same feeling about yourselves.

But, take care : it is not in any way said that *we* are the shining ones. You can never examine yourself and find out whether *you* are shining, for surely your self-examination will always tell you that you are not.

The Word tells us that the fact is that *God* is shining " in the darkness " that is in your heart, and when God shines, there cannot but be a reflection, without you yourself knowing or noticing it. For you and I are not the beams, we are only like a mirror (chapter iii, 18) which reflects, but does not produce, light. This brings you back from your own attitude of mind to a *fact* and this fact is stronger than yourself, it is real and unalterable : *God* shines in your heart. He Himself says that is true. Forget your earthen vessel and how dark it is—that does not matter. You cannot prevent God from being what He is in the face of Jesus Christ. The transcendent power belongs to Him and not to you. Do not try to analyse whether you are shining or not—trust the fact.

Bible Societies and Bible Society men are quite earthen, as are our troubles and our problems. There are no sunbeams in our programme for the day, it just consists of matter. But I tell you that God is shining in this matter. The Bible is His concentrated sunlight. The book itself consists of earthen paper and black print, but its transcendent power is not created by our production of Bibles. However, if we stopped producing the earthen vessels, God would lose His tool and His mirror for men. Our daily work is done in darkness (and sometimes we are strongly conscious of this), but the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ actually uses our difficulties with the matter and the methods and the earthen arrangements in order to get the opportunities for becoming available as the transcendent light in the world.

And so we are not " consoled," but rather encouraged and made responsible for the earthen vessels and not for the heavenly power. *He* gives that to us, in spite of our darkness. Step into the sunshine—darkness is gone.

DISCOVERY OF THE U.B.S.

A Newcomer's Impressions of the Matlock Conference

HERBERT M. ARROWSMITH

GREAT issues are often joined to small occasions. I felt that this was certainly true of a meeting at Matlock, England, in June, 1950. For this was the occasion of the meeting of the Standing Committee of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES.

I was present, by gracious invitation, as a visitor. I had known of the formation of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES. I knew, broadly, its aims, intentions, functions and purposes. But Australia is on the far perimeter and, from that distant perspective, I had sometimes wondered (to make confession !) how far the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES organisation was warranted, and whether it was not just a little too academic and removed from the crucial realities of an intense world situation. I had become a little impatient of an increasing trend to establish all sorts of organisations aimed to " evaluate the situation from a global point of view," to use a phrase so irritatingly frequent in superficial ecumenics. I had a troublesome query in the back of my mind as to whether there was not a surfeit of organisations. I was suspicious of the multiplicity of conferences, feeling a little restlessness lest conferences might be an end in themselves. How many conferences are destinations, and not departure-points !

But I have been convinced. I believe, completely and enthusiastically in the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES organisation. It is valid in its being, valuable in its potential, vigorous in its activity, vital in its importance, and already vindicated in its achievement.

The UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES organisation is not a super Bible Society. It is not a new Bible Society. Its purpose is deep-level fellowship and top-level strategy. M. Olivier Béguin expressed it admirably, I think, when he said that the U.B.S. exists :

> " to incarnate an idea, to give visible and living expression to the conviction shared by all Bible Societies that they are partners in a common world enterprise. It is the mission of the U.B.S. to represent that fellowship, to interpret that common concern and to provide the common ground upon which all Bible Societies can come together and co-ordinate their action and where they can share experiences, plans and hopes."

This purpose was the administrative background of the Matlock meeting. But there was also another factor—the factor of world crisis. For the meeting was held in the atmosphere and climate of tension. There was the familiar and awesome pattern of competing and colliding ideologies, the revolt of Asia, the international suspicion and distrust, the threat of atomic competition, the undercurrent of apprehension. These were the contemporary stage. The surroundings were sombre, the lighting dull.

The inexorable pressure of two world wars had left a stress upon the whole Church, and had imposed a certain strain upon the associated and interlocked programme of the Bible Societies. Some doors had closed, others were slowly closing even though as yet ajar, whilst others were wondrously open with opportunity. Literacy was providing a huge new reading population. But costs of production and distribution were steeply increasing. How best to deal with this world situation ? What are the priorities ?

This was the situation to which the Standing Committee at Matlock addressed itself.

Matlock is in Derbyshire—a county which has its hills—the " peak-country." Matlock is a little town set in a valley. But the venue of the meeting was on a hill, giving a view of the extensive surrounding countryside. This is an allegory, for the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES is as a watchtower set on a hill. And from that tower may well come an answer to the persistent and anxious cry of to-day's bewilderment : " Watchman, what of the night ? "

Members of the Standing Committee present at the meeting were : the Rev. Dr. Eric M. North, who, with soft shrewd skill, guided the business of all the sessions ; Bishop C. W. Noack ; the Rev. W. J. Platt ; the Rev. Dr. Wm. C. Somerville ; the Rev A. H. Wilkinson ; M. Olivier Béguin (General Secretary of the U.B.S.) and Bishop Berggrav, its President, were also present.

These few met together, not in their capacities as national representatives, but rather as representatives of the aggregate Bible Society conscience of the world. They met to survey the whole field of Bible Society activity, to examine its contemporary strains and stresses, to assess its gravity, to discern its opportunity and to estimate its priorities.

Much of what was discussed cannot be effectively stated at once, for the survey of the present situation has a good deal which, in the nature of the case, is confidential and cannot be publicly canvassed A good deal of thinking to-day must be very real in its planning, but cautious and restrained in its expression. With this qualification, however, a summary of the more salient features of the discussions and decisions follows :

The 1949 Statistical Review

Circulation : A report on the world circulation of Scriptures by the Bible Societies last year can be found elsewhere in this issue (see page 24). It is worth noticing that this figure, although steadily increasing since the end of the war, has not yet reached its pre-war level of about 25 million copies of Scripture in the peak years.

Translation : The last issue of the *Bulletin* (second quarter 1950) reported on the new publications—Bibles, Testaments, or Portions—issued last year. The Bible, in full or in part, has been published up to the present in 1,118 languages, of which 190 were complete Bibles and 245 complete Testaments ; the remainder being only one or several portions, except for 92 languages in which only selections exist.

Co-operation and sharing : There has been a healthy and encouraging development of the spirit of practical fellowship and helpfulness by individual Societies in the common task. Nine national Bible Societies assisted 14 other national societies or agencies with Scriptures, paper or funds, to the value of £300,000. This is quite additional to support given to their agencies abroad by " missionary " Bible Societies.

This sense of solidarity in the common programme of Scripture distribution is a great achievement. In all these cases, the U.B.S. acted as co-ordinator and as the channel and instrument of this mutual aid.

The U.B.S. imprint : This had been used in various editions, totalling 3,200,000 copies, in those cases where the vexed political situation made it inadvisable to issue Scriptures with the imprint of the national Society.

The General Survey

The general survey of the world scene provided many items of interest. *Austria* witnessed a vigorous circulation of Scriptures, whilst *Poland* and *Czechoslovakia* had the largest circulation in their history. In *Hungary* a Bible Council had been formed, and the B.F.B.S. Agency there handed over to the Reformed Church of Hungary. *Belgium* had observed and *France* was preparing for a Bible Sunday for the first time. In the *Netherlands*, 11,000 new contributors had been secured for the work of the Bible Society, whilst in *Norway* plans were being made for the issue of a Bible for Youth *Brazil* had a circulation of a million Scriptures. In *Japan*, a 10-million distribution campaign was in progress, 2,000,000 having been issued in 1949. The Japan Bible Society had been granted legal status by the Government, and there were 80 colporteurs at work in that country. Special steps had become necessary in *China* because of the closure of the Yangtze river, and 340,000 Scriptures had been flown in to Tsingtao, Tientsin, Peking, Sian, Lanchow, Chengtu, Sichang and Kunning. Truly, emergency conditions demand emergency action.

Relationship with Ecumenical Movements

The Standing Committee agreed that the U.B.S. should be closely related in an advisory capacity to any ecumenical organisation of a Christian and missionary character. This is not to mean that the U.B.S. becomes identified with the special emphases or peculiar prepossessions of that organisation. The Bible Societies are concerned with the circulation of the Scriptures, and the association of the U.B.S. with any missionary or ecumenical movement is at the centre of the acceptance of Holy Scripture, and not on the perimeter of interpretation.

But it is to be emphasised that any association of the U.B.S. with the International Missionary Council or the World Council of Churches, is not to preclude a full fellowship with any other group of people whose function and aim involves, directly or indirectly, the circulation of the Scriptures. The U.B.S. is limited in its purpose, but unlimited in its fellowship.

The conclusion reached was, therefore, that the U.B.S. should, in these matters, proceed on an *ad hoc* basis, and instead of trying to work too much on a basis of theory, it should watch the occasions for suitable contacts. The U.B.S. should keep sufficiently in touch, to know what is going on that has a bearing on its work and to take such opportunities as can be secured, to interpret to persons in the ecumenical movements the significance of its work for the missionary enterprise and for the life of the Church.

A specific application of this *ad hoc* principle was studied through the possibility of some concrete co-operation with the World Council of Churches in the realm of its studies and work on evangelism. It was decided to offer to the W.C.C. a secretary who would co-operate with the present secretary of the W.C.C. Commission on Evangelism—and in this way participate in the whole work of the Commission—but who would, at the same time, " specialise in the study and promotion of the circulation and use of the Scriptures in evangelism."

Far Eastern Translators' Conference

Consideration was given to the tempo of translation in the Far East and in the Pacific. Earlier discussions in 1949 on this subject had indicated the general advisability of a translators' conference in East Asia. Indonesia, Indo-China, Burma and New Guinea (with New Britain) presented a large field where a considerable amount of translation was yet to be done. The relative values of a comprehensive conference for the whole area, as against a series of regional conferences for closely related language areas, were carefully assessed in the light of recommendations submitted to the Committee by the " Translations Group." It was not an easy question to decide. Considerations of urgency had to be weighed against those of economy. It was finally decided that the U.B.S. should :

" Concur in the plan for a regional translators' conference chiefly for Indonesia, to be held in Djakarta about December/January, 1951/1952, to be attended by Bible translators at work in Indonesia and by the translation secretaries of the A.B.S., B.F.B.S. and N.B.S."

The Translations Group was asked to

" investigate the advisability of holding one or more regional conferences elsewhere in South East Asia about the same time, to fit in with the programme of the translation secretaries,"

and it was also agreed

" that the regional conferences should be held under the auspices of the United Bible Societies . . . . . but that the expenses for travel and entertainment should be borne by the Societies concerned."

It was realised, however, that a good deal of preparatory work would become necessary if the regional conferences were to achieve the maximum results of inspiration and guidance, for both present and potential translators,

and the Translations Group was requested to make full enquiries regarding the need for such conferences, their value, possible programmes, such findings to be presented if possible within a few months.

Other Matters

In addition to these major and immediate matters, the Committee gave consideration to a number of other items.

The Standing Committee recognised that it was meeting in a capacity representative of 24 Bible Societies throughout the world, and that the environment and circumstances of these Societies varied greatly. Some were in areas where Church and State relationships were strained and tense ; some were very new Societies, not yet matured in experience nor stable in resources ; some were under pressure of political restraint or of economic stringency ; some were national Societies which had not exhibited a missionary zeal for the propagation of the Scriptures beyond their own borders.

A " Message to Bible Societies " was therefore accepted and approved for transmission to all the constituent Societies. A copy of this message is printed elsewhere in this *Bulletin*. It is a statesmanlike document, merging well the *koinonia* and the *didache* of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES' programme.

Another important matter under consideration was the question of finding Vice-Presidents which the U.B.S. Council had last year remitted to the Standing Committee for further study. After thorough discussion of the subject, it was decided to invite Bishop C. K. Jacob of the Church of South India to become a Vice-President of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES and I have just heard that our General Secretary has received word from Bishop Jacob, accepting this appointment. We rejoice to think that in this way further emphasis will be given to the world-wide scope of the U.B.S.

Further discussions included preparations for the 1945 Third Jubilee of the B.F.B.S., involving the 150th Anniversary of modern Bible Society work generally ; the 1955 fifth centenary of the Gutenberg Bible ; the issuance of a general statement on the position of Christianity in Europe to-day ; an examination and appraisal of the methods of Scripture circulation ; the interchange and sharing of literature ; the planning of future U.B.S. meetings. One of the devotional sessions with which each day's business began and ended, found one prayer which expressed much of the spirit of the Standing Committee's deliberations :

" Forgive us " (we prayed) " for our failure to use what thou hast put in our hand to use and to do."

Let me conclude this article with a second quotation from the report of the General Secretary :

" The year 1949-1950 has witnessed the further development of the U.B.S., although as yet it is but a tender plant. It has still to send down its roots and to open out. It is not the ambition of the U.B.S. to become a power in the world ; nor does it ask to be revered as the great ones of the world are revered. It seeks neither greatness, brilliance, nor prestige. What it does desire to accomplish is the humble ministry of creating understanding and collaboration, of promoting fellowship in their common mission amongst those whose calling it is to produce and distribute among all nations that Book on which alone can be founded the unity of the churches, the unity of missionary action, the unity and salvation of all men."

MESSAGE TO MEMBER SOCIETIES OF THE U.B.S.

from

THE STANDING COMMITTEE

THE Standing Committee of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES has met at Matlock to review the activity of the U.B.S. during the past year, to prepare the programme for the next and to deal with the various questions which the Council had remitted to us for action, or which have appeared of importance in the present circumstances.

We wish to send you our fraternal greetings and to tell you how much you have been in our thoughts and prayers during these days. Once more we have been conscious of the spirit of real fellowship which unites us in the common task of making available to mankind the Book which was " written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." (Romans XV, 4.) As we have reviewed the work of the U.B.S., we have felt that our fellowship is making sure and steady progress and that the value of its practical service is being increasingly demonstrated.

We send our particular greetings to those Societies which have been formed most recently and pray that they may grow from strength to strength. We express our concern that the versions of Scripture which they circulate shall be both faithful to the original text of Holy Scripture, and also in such language and form as shall most widely appeal to the multitudes of to-day whom we hold in our compassionate thought, as surely as did our Lord. We pray also that the younger Societies may gain in unity and strength and in support from the Christian constituencies amongst whom they are placed.

We note with appreciation the growth of co-operation between the Societies and the increasing extent to which they are taking responsibility in assisting in work beyond their own borders.

We deplore our inefficiences and weaknesses, and we know how unequal to our task we all have been, but we trust God will also answer our prayer, renew our strength, our vision, our spirit, our readiness, and will grant us the support we need for the fulfilment of this world task which we see placed before us.

In looking at the present state of human affairs, at the struggle of ideologies, at the rising wave of materialism spreading all over the world, and seeing at the same time the new and genuine interest which is developing in all places for the Word of God, we cannot help recalling the words of the prophet Amos :

> " Behold, the day is come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD."
>
> (Amos VIII, 11)

Our call is to circulate now this Word of the Lord in written form and it is for us, too, to take earnestly and personally, the call and the promise of Jesus Christ :

> " When he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few ; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest."
>
> (Matthew IX, 36-38)

NEWS FROM ALL THE WORLD

Under this heading we do not intend to give only information on the Bible Societies, but we also want to include such facts as may or should have a bearing on Bible Society work. This information should therefore not only tell us what other Societies are doing, but should also help us to apprehend the whole realm of our common responsibilities and should lead us to think out how best we may extend our own activity in the future, in such a way as to fulfil our calling to the utmost.

Austria

THE hundredth anniversary of the beginning of Bible work in Austria by the B.F.B.S. will be celebrated on the occasion of Bible Sunday, 24th September, 1950.

A special service will be held on the morning of that day in the main evangelical church in Vienna, at which Bishop E. Berggrav, Primate of Norway and President of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES, will preach the sermon. Another meeting is being organised for the afternoon in a " neutral " hall, when several speakers from the B.F.B.S. and other Bible Societies will give short addresses.

Other manifestations are under consideration.

In connection with this celebration, a regional conference of representatives from European Bible Societies will also take place in Vienna on the 25th and 26th September.

Belgium

Bible exhibitions are being held all over the country. Antwerp was the first city to hold one early in May, and was followed by Brussels ; the material will go to Liége, Gand, Dour and several other places. One section of the exhibition is devoted to the history of the Book (reproduction of manuscripts, etc.) ; another deals with the translation aspect of Bible Society work, with special emphasis on translations made for the Belgian Congo (68 languages and dialects, about two-thirds of the languages spoken in that region). A final section shows illustrated Bibles for children and braille New Testaments in French. As the Belgian newspaper " Le Soir " states : " This is the first time in Belgium that there is found together in one place such an impressive collection of works related to the central book of the Christian faith. It is also the first time that such a large number of copies in different languages and varying formats has been shown here."

*

Bible Sunday on 30th April was used by all the evangelical churches in Charleroi as the occasion for a joint missionary enterprise. Besides special services which were held in all the churches, two evangelistic meetings centred on the Bible were organised jointly in the afternoon, the one being held in the open air in a square, the other in the theatre, both attracting many listeners.

*

In spite of great difficulties, the work of the colporteurs is developing in some parts of the country. During the first six months of this year, their sales were 50% higher than in the corresponding period last year.

*

The Secretary of the *Belgian Bible Society* has been the guest of various synods of the Belgian churches where he has had opportunity for speaking about the work of the Society and that of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES.

China

Mr. David McGavin has not yet received permission to re-enter Shanghai. He is remaining in Hongkong where he can supply the needs of Chinese Scriptures outside of China. During the last six months, Scriptures in Chinese have been sent from Hongkong to Indo-China, Burma, Malaya, Indonesia, South Seas, Philippines, Formosa and Japan, and fresh orders from those places are still coming in.

*

Miss Margaret Brown, a former missionary in China, stated at a meeting in Edinburgh that even if Christian institutions have to be closed down and even if all foreigners have to leave the country, the Chinese Church was never richer in leadership than to-day, and the work of spreading the Gospel through the printed Word is likely to be one of the most important methods of evangelism during these years of trouble and change.

*

Mr. Ian Findlay, agent of the N.B.S.S. in China, has sent the following information to the headquarters of his Society :

" In response to a telegram pleading for supplies (Bibles only), Dr. Mortensen sent me 200 copies of the Chinese Bible No. 014R. These were received on the morning of 25th inst.

" We have all read of ' a run on the bank,' but how many have heard of ' a run on the Bible Society ' ? And literally that is what has happened ! It got noised around that these Books had come in. Of that 200-copy consignment I have but twelve left ! Surely that constitutes something of a record which should be known to our friends, who may be doubting the value of the continuity of the China ministry.

" And further, my waiting order book shows that, when possible, I am committed to the supplying of no less than 200 copies of the Chinese Bible No. 14pi. They are on the way from Shanghai.

" My increasing experience is that folks want Bibles rather than New Testaments."

*

A Bible House programme is on the air regularly over the Christian Broadcasting station every Tuesday night.

*

The estimated circulation figures for the first six months of the *China Bible House* year 1950 (1st November, 1949, to 31st October, 1950) are the following :

Bibles	30,847
Testaments	34,103
Portions	513,456
Total	578,406

It is reported that sales are improving in all regions, except Central and North-East China.

Czechoslovakia

The *Czechoslovak Bible Society* held its annual meeting in the latter part of June. It was resolved to publish both the Polish and the Hungarian Bible in Czechoslovakia, since the demand there is so great.

The meeting also passed a resolution of gratitude to the B.F.B.S. for the recent gift of printing paper and binding material. It was also decided to print a new edition of the Slovak New Testament and Psalms, the revision of which has just been completed. Further it was resolved to form a new translation committee, consisting of both Czech and Slovak theologians to complete the revision of the whole Bible.

Dr. Victor Hájek was unanimously elected Chairman of the Czechoslovak Bible Society.

England

The *British and Foreign Bible Society* has just issued the Gospel of Matthew in illustrated magazine format (24 pages), under the title of " The Man in the Street." Many booksellers have already ordered copies and it will be on sale at newsagents all over the country ; 110,000 copies have been printed and it is expected that reprints will be needed up to 200,000 copies in all.

*

Within the first six months of this year the B.F.B.S. has published 1,513,613 copies of Scripture, as against 1,345,081 during the same period last year. The production of Bibles and Testaments has risen by about 100,000 copies of each, whereas about 40,000 less Portions have been published during this period. 539 tons of books have been despatched all over the world during these six months, as against 405 tons during the same period in 1949.

*

More than 400 people from all parts of England and Wales, as well as visitors from the Continent of Europe, from India, Jamaica, the Americas, Japan, Australia and New Zealand attended the B.F.B.S. conference at Swanwick in June. The speakers on the opening theme, " The Hand of God," recounted their experiences of the Hand of God at work in Nazi Germany, in Japan and in the Gobi desert, bringing a challenge to all who heard to a more abandoned faith in the day of trial and opportunity. The main theme of " The World, the Book and YOU " was maintained throughout the conference ; news was given of the Society's tasks and achievements round the world and there were opportunities for group discussion on various subjects. On the final day, the question " What next ?" brought in the vision for the future, looking on to 1954 and the celebration of the Third Jubilee of the B.F.B.S. and of Bible Society work throughout the world.

*

The B.F.B.S. has started upon its publicity campaign toward the celebration of its Third Jubilee in 1954. In the idea of the organisers, this Jubilee should not only be a commemoration of the birth of the British and Foreign Bible Society on the 7th March, 1804, but should become " the Third Jubilee of Bible Society work throughout the world."

The first pamphlet published for this occasion also states :

" The formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society in 1804 and the vigour of its early agents soon stimulated similar ventures in other countries. Within twenty years, Bible Societies had been formed in America, Norway, Sweden, Germany, the Netherlands and Scotland, while the organisation

of the Parent Society had spread throughout the world. To-day this widespread enterprise has been drawn together into a world fellowship of Bible Societies called ' The United Bible Societies,' so that the urgent need of the world for Scriptures may be met.

" The Bible, put into men's hands in their own tongues by Bible Society colporteurs or by missionaries, has shown a startling power to remake human life. In Persia the chief means of evangelism has been through the Bible ; in Indonesia whole communities of Christians, such as the Batak Church, have been created by it ; and the evangelisation of Korea began and largely continues by the same means. Behind the endless problems of translation, production and distribution there is the miracle of God's dealing with the souls of men through His Word.

" It is not enough to look back and give thanks, for the hour is no less critical for us than it was for those men who obeyed the vision in 1804 when Napoleon's armies waited at Boulogne for favourable weather. Their response was a movement which has since profoundly influenced the world. In our no less revolutionary day we must look for a similar awakening. They loved a Book and entertained the fantastic notion of giving it to the whole world. We, who have entered into their labours, must point men in the first place not to their achievements or to our own, but to the Book."

Five preparatory pamphlets have already been issued, suggesting possible lines of action for strengthening the interest of Christian people in the cause of the world distribution of the Bible. The formation of regional action councils, and fireside groups, the appointment of Jubilee secretaries in the auxiliaries, the publication of booklets on the various aspects of the work of a Bible Society and the distribution of special intercession booklets, prayer cards and forms of service are some of the measures taken with a view to developing the interest of people in the work of the Bible Societies and to making them more aware of the importance of the Bible, both in the life of individuals and in the life of nations.

A Jubilee fund of £237,000 is to be launched for certain specified capital expenditure, and the Society will seek to increase the annual income to £390,000. These are world figures towards which the Dominions will contribute their share. The British Auxiliaries aim to raise £100,000 towards the capital sum and to increase annual income by £50,000.

France

The Secretary of the *Alliance Biblique Française* has been working for some months on the preparation of material for the missionary campaign which was planned last autumn. Illustrated jackets for Bibles, posters, postcards, stamps and tracts have been printed and widely distributed.

A small publicity poster with brief information on the importance of Bible circulation under the heading " The Bible, the book that does not stay on the shelf " has been circulated in the bibliographical bulletin published by the booksellers' association. Within four days, 81 orders came in for a total of some 230 Bibles.

" La Bible dans le Monde " is the name of the news bulletin published by the *Alliance Biblique Française*. The first issue of this bulletin appeared early in June and has been widely distributed throughout France in view of the approaching Bible Sunday. It contains news on Bible work from all parts

of the world, and also a short article by the Rev. Dr. Marc Boegner, Chairman of the *Fédération Protestante de France*, and of the *Alliance Biblique Française*.

" Our Bible " writes Pastor Boegner, " is not entirely ours, unless we are also ready for it to be the Bible of all men. Let us beware of that subtle egoism which too often perverts our Christian life and to which we attach too great a price, without having any very real sense of our responsibility toward those to whom that life should be a testimony and a call to God.

" Do you not discern in this dechristianised, materialist world, void of God, the signs of the famine and the thirst to hear the words of the Lord foretold by the prophet Amos? Everywhere, there is a famine for God, which only the Church and her faithful can meet. And the first response to this famine is to distribute the Bible, not only with intelligence and with love, in testifying to its decisive action in the life of the Church and in our personal life, but also with the unshakeable confidence that through this Word the Spirit of Christ will provide both the bread and the water of life for so many of our hungry and thirsty contemporaries, and will feed them with the food prepared by God for them as well as for us."

*

At a meeting of the committee of the A.B.F., M. Blumenthal was able to present copies of the first illustrated Gospel produced by a Bible Society in magazine format. The French Committee had chosen the Gospel of Mark to which a few verses from the other Gospels had been added in an appendix. Most of the illustrations are taken from current daily life in France.

Germany

The *Privilegierte Württembergische Bibelanstalt* has sent to Africa (either direct or through the B.F.B.S. in London) about 10,000 copies of its edition of the Swahili Bible, translated by Dr. Roehl. This edition had been printed in 1939, but the war made it impossible to send off the books. Although the plants in Stuttgart suffered severely from bombing, and large numbers of Scriptures were destroyed by fire, these Swahili Bibles remained intact. They have been sent out free of charge, except for the cost of binding which was done after the war and will be repaid by the missionary societies.

*

For the first time since the war the P. W. B. has published an edition (20,000 copies) of its " Senfkornbibel " (32mo.). This Bible, which is of a very reduced size, was very popular before the war, and was again in great demand.

*

The *Evangelische Haupt-Bibelgesellschaft zu Berlin*, for the first time in its history, had a stand at the last Leipzig fair. Scriptures were sold for 60,000 Eastmarks.

*

On the occasion of his 60th birthday early this year, Mr. Emil Diehl, director of the P.W.B., received an honorary doctorate in theology from the University of Tübingen, in recognition of his services in the realm of Bible production and Bible distribution.

The work of the P.W.B. has also been acknowledged by the theological faculty of the University of Münster, which has just recently awarded an honorary doctorate in theology to Prelate Schlatter, " who, as Chairman of the P.W.B., even in difficult times, rendered great service to the cause of Holy

Scripture, in the distribution both of the German Bible and of the critical editions of the Bible in the original tongues, and in particular also promoted the important work of the revision of the Luther Bible which had been in preparation for many years."

*

Oberkonsistorialrat Lic. Dr. Oskar Söhngen has been elected chairman of the E.H.B. in succession to President Dr. Georg Burghart, who has retired at the age of 84. Dr. Söhngen has been a member of the Board of Managers of the E.H.B. for many years, and is vice-chairman for Eastern Germany of the *Union of Evangelical Bible Societies in Germany*. He has been specially active lately in the question of the revision of the church hymn book and in dealing with cultural problems.

*

The German Bible Societies are active in the production of Scriptures in a modern and attractive form and presentation, in order to revive the interest of men of to-day in the Scriptures.

The P.W.B. has published a booklet containing the Parable of the Prodigal Son with seven illustrations by Karl Kühnle, a modern German painter, and comments on these illustrations. An edition has also been begun of a picture Bible reproducing paintings by Rudolf Schäfer, accompanied by the appropriate texts of Scripture.

The E.H.B. has also issued modern illustrated selections of Bible texts, as well as a book in large, modern type, containing several letters of the Apostle Paul in a new translation by Drs. Richard and Julius Stahn.

It should be remembered that, unlike many Bible Societies, the German and several other European Bible Societies are not limited by their statutes to the production and distribution of complete books of the Bible without note or comment.

*

The *Altenburger Bibelgesellschaft*, the only producing German Bible Society having its seat in the Russian Zone, has started and is further planning to print this year : 160,000 selections from the Bible (six different selections), 200,000 pocket Bibles, 150,000 New Testaments, 500,000 illustrated Gospels of Luke, 200,000 illustrated Acts of the Apostles. Paper (for the most part sent from abroad by helping Bible Societies) and the licences are available for most of these editions. The Altenburg Bible Society is also publishing concordances and small Bible dictionaries for Scripture teachers in the Eastern Zone. (Scripture lessons are no longer given by school teachers and the churches are training some 15,000 Scripture teachers.)

The Altenburg Bible Society has also been given the task by the churches of printing an edition of 50,000 copies of a book for school children entitled " Christenlehre " and containing selections from the Bible, the small catechism of Luther, a few prayers, etc.

*

The E.H.B. which has its seat in West Berlin, but is producing in and mainly for the Eastern Zone, has received the authorisation to print 135,000 Bibles and 100,000 New Testaments. These will be printed on paper given earlier to the E.H.B. by foreign Bible Societies helping Germany. Permission has also been granted by the authorities in Eastern Germany for the production of 5,000 braille Testaments for the blind. The printing and main distribution

will be undertaken, in co-operation with the E.H.B. by the " Gesellschaft für Christliches Leben unter den Deutschen Blinden " in Wernigerode (Saxony.)

*

The *Missionsbund für die Verbreitung des Evangeliums*—previously known as *Licht in Osten* and mainly responsible in the past for evangelistic work amongst Germans in Eastern Europe and Russia, and amongst Eastern refugees in Germany—is considering the extension of its activity in the way of Bible colportage. Contacts have been made with the B.F.B.S. in London and with the P.W.B. in Stuttgart for the furtherance of this plan.

Honduras

For the first time colportage work has been carried out here by aeroplane. Mr. Ralph Rice, one of the colporteurs employed by the Central America Agency, who had given a great impulse already last year to colportage work in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Honduras, was invited by a missionary of the National Holiness Mission working among a very scattered population, to undertake a tour with him. This is the way Mr. Rice described his first experience of colportage work by aeroplane :

" With the aeroplane at times we were able to go to one town, work it thoroughly from house to house, then to the next town by late afternoon. On foot or mule back we would have spent two or three days to get to the first town, rest one day in order to be able to work the next day, then take off on another jaunt of two or three days to get to the town where we arrived late afternoon the first day by plane. The work was done in one-fifth of the time it would have taken on foot or by mule back, and we got no saddle sores or blistered feet from long treks over the mountains. By aeroplane we were always fresh and ready to go again."

India

In the first issue of the *Bulletin* we reproduced a letter concerning the need for Telegu Bibles. The General Secretary of the *Bible Society of India, Pakistan and Ceylon* sends the following information in relation to that question :

" Before the war, the average circulation of the Telegu Bible was under 2,000 copies a year, and editions were never larger than 8,000. In 1936 an edition of 4,000 was printed, later increased to 8,000 and delivered in 1941. In the same year a Reference Bible, Royal 8vo edition of 5,000, and an edition without references of 4,000 were printed. Owing to the difficulty of securing paper the next edition was of 5,000 copies on ordinary paper and 200 copies on India paper, printed on a hand machine in Secunderabad in 1945.

No fresh stocks of Bible paper were available until the end of 1949. Meanwhile, the text had been re-edited, and the diocesan press, Madras, undertook in October, 1948, to print by hand composition an edition of 25,000 copies. This edition is expected to be delivered in 1952.

In order to save time it was decided in March, 1949, to print a further edition of 25,000 copies by photo-offset, but it was discovered that the paper supplied from abroad was not suitable for offset printing and if used, would not only take three or four years to print, but would be unsatisfactory when finished. Fortunately, it has been found possible to purchase a suitable paper—though not a standard Bible paper—and 20 tons have been purchased locally. This edition of 25,000 is expected to be completed in June, 1950.

In addition, the B.F.B.S. have very kindly undertaken to print by photo-offset an edition of 30,000 copies which will be ready for delivery about the end of this year.

In regard to Telegu Testaments, the diocesan press, Madras, is printing by hand composition an edition of 28,000 which is expected to be delivered in October this year, and an offset edition of 3,000 has been finished and is being distributed."

*

There has been a 6% increase in literacy in West Bengal during the last seven years. According to the 1941 census 16% of the population were literate, and in 1948 this figure had risen to 22% according to an educational survey carried out recently by the West Bengal Government.

Indonesia

The so-called children's Bibles have always had a large circulation in the Netherlands. Since Professor van der Palm, well over a hundred years ago published one for the first time, hardly a year has passed in which there has not been either a new one published, or an old one re-printed. Just before the war, the Netherlands Bible Society published the childrens' Bible by W. G. van de Hulst, which was popular in the Netherlands, in the Toba Batta language of Sumatra. This edition has been out of print for some time, and the Netherlands Bible Society is therefore making a second edition, enlarged by still more pictures than were in the first edition.

*

The revision of the Javanese translation of the Old Testament was finished just before the Japanese invasion of Java. Fortunately, it did not share the fate of so many other manuscripts which were destroyed by the invader. After the war, it was decided to print it immediately but unfortunately lack of paper and other difficulties, delayed the printing. Thus it was not until last year that the first volume of the Old Testament could be published, and now in June, 1950, the second volume is ready for delivery. These two volumes of a total of 1,402 pages, not only give for the first time this revision of the translation by Mr. Jansz Sr., by the Committee of which Mr. Jansz Jr. and Dr. F. L. Bakker were the chief members, but they also give the Old Testament in Latin script for the first time. Up till now, the Scriptures had always been printed in Javanese script, but this is now falling into disuse, so that it is to be expected that henceforth the Javanese publications will all be in Latin script.

*

In 1949 the sale of Bibles, Testaments and Portions in Indonesia again showed an increase of 50% over 1948, and the total figure exceeded 77,000 It is expected that 1950 will show a return to the pre-war figure of about 120,000 copies.

*

Only in very few Indonesian languages do the returns from sales approach anywhere near the real cost price of the Bible. In most of the languages the Bible Societies have not only to carry all the overhead expenses and all such expenses as transport, storage, loss of interest, etc., but they have also to put the catalogue price even below the cost of paper, printing and binding, so that publishing in these languages involves a steady loss. The more Bibles are sold, the greater the loss. As long as the purchasing capacity of most of the people does not increase, this state of affairs will remain. The Bible Society

wants people to be able to buy a Bible and it will therefore always fix the selling price within the purchasing power of the people, even if this is far below cost price.

In order to meet these losses, the three Bible Societies supporting the work in Indonesia (the Netherlands Bible Society, National Bible Society of Scotland and British & Foreign Bible Society, see *Bulletin* 1st quarter 1950) created the *Joint Indonesian Publication Fund* in which their contributions, fixed at a yearly total of £2,500, are pooled. The increase in printing costs has made it necessary for the Societies to augment their contributions since the war.

But at the same time, it appears that in the last two years the returns from sales have been greater than was originally expected. With the increased production costs, wages have risen and consequently the price of an Indonesian New Testament which before the war was about 70 cents, could in the last few years be raised to fl.2.50. As a result, the Fund was financially in a better position on 31st December, 1949, than was expected a few years ago. This is indeed fortunate, for the marked devaluation in Indonesian money on 9th March, 1950, will deal it a heavy blow. The result will only be seen in the report at the end of this year.

The total income of the Fund from its inception on 1st July, 1938, until 31st December, 1949, amounted to about £53,700, nearly one-third of it resulting from the returns from sales.

Total expenditure during this time for the paper, printing, binding and shipping of 458,512 Bibles, Testaments and Portions in 17 languages was about £42,100, leaving a balance on 31st December, of just over £11,000, an amount which will not be adequate to meet the expenditure for editions then in the press for delivery during 1950. These were the second and third volumes of 19,000 Javanese Bibles, 10,000 Toba Batta Bibles, 50,000 Indonesian Old Testaments, and 50,000 Indonesian New Testaments, 145,000 Javanese Portions, 10,000 Sadan Toradja New Testaments, 5,000 Karo Batta Old Testaments, and several smaller editions. Together these will call for an expenditure of nearly £33,000.

Japan

" The eyes of Japan are fixed on two books. One is ' Das Kapital ' by Karl Marx. The other is the Holy Bible. Japan is at the cross-roads," said Dr. Shiro Murata, director of the *Japan Bible Society*.

Four million copies of Scripture have been distributed since the end of the war. They have been mostly sold at a reduced price, but not given away. However, during 1949, 2,500 New Testaments were given to prisoners-of-war returning from Siberia. 100,000 copies of the " Sayings of Jesus "—a selection of passages from the Gospels—were sent to civil prisons, and a further 3,000 New Testaments were distributed in hostels for war widows.

■

Mr. M. Sakata, one of the directors of the Japan Bible Society, will be visiting several Bible Societies in Europe during the summer, on the occasion of his attendance at a Y.M.C.A. meeting in Denmark in August. Mr. Sakata was present at some of the sessions of the U.B.S. Council last year in New York.

Korea

In 10 months in 1949 the *Korean Bible Society* circulated 207,000 more Gospels than in 12 months the previous year, bringing the total to 379,151 Gospels.

■

The Korean Bible Society has set aside in its 1951 budget 11,000,000 Won (£1,964) for colportage. "Colportage will be revived," writes Mr. Im, the general secretary of the Society. "Perhaps the same methods will not be used as in past decades, but the object will remain the same."

With the help of the American Bible Society which has sent paper and binding material to the Korean Bible Society, it has been possible to print copies of the whole Korean New Testament and Genesis in Braille.

Malaya

Circulation in Malaya last year amounted to 83,631 copies of Scripture, as compared with 44,979 in 1948. 75% of these were circulated by the nine colporteurs at work in the area. This increase is due mainly to the fact that the shortage of supplies has now been almost entirely overcome.

Special efforts have also been made to bring the Gospels to political prisoners. A missionary active in that work writes :

"We are more and more convinced through this experience that there is nothing like the Word of God to give to men. If a tract is given, it is usually read and put aside. But if a Gospel, New Testament or Bible is given, it is treasured and read over and over again."

Mexico

1,000 new schools have been built during the last two years in Mexico, and in three years the number of public school teachers has increased from 4,764 to 7,344.

The first library for the blind ever set up in the republic is being opened in Mexico City.

Netherlands

There has been published in Amsterdam an edition of the New Testament giving in six columns, alongside one another, the six different Dutch translations of the New Testament which are most widely used. The oldest is the States General version of 1637, which through the centuries was quite generally used. The next is the Dutch translation of the version of Luther, which is used in the Dutch Lutheran Church, the third is the Leyden version, made by a group of scholars of Leyden university about the end of the last century. The fourth is a translation of Prof. Dr. A. M. Brouwer of Utrecht university, in the beginning of this century. The fifth, the Roman Catholic translation of the Petrus Canisius Association, and the sixth, the new version of the *Netherlands Bible Society*, which was published for the first time in 1939 and of which since then nearly half a million copies have been sold. This volume, which is very well edited, will be a great help for church ministers who, in studying the Bible, wish to compare the different ways in which a verse is translated.

The Netherlands Bible Society held its annual meeting on 21st June this year. This was the occasion for a special ceremony in honour of Dr. Rutgers, who was retiring from the General Secretaryship of the Society. Several

farewell speeches were addressed to Dr. Rutgers, including one by the General Secretary of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES.

Dr. Rutgers will continue to devote time and energy to the Netherlands Bible Society, as well as to the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES in which he has still an important part to play as secretary of the Functional Group on Translations, and as administrator of the U.B.S. quarterly, *The Bible Translator*.

Nigeria

26 governmental centres are now operating in Nigeria for mass education, and about 30,000 adults are attending classes.

Further, there are about 100 mission centres working mainly amongst adults, of whom about 30,000 are also attending classes in literacy organised by the missions.

Peru

Since the beginning of 1949, the Peru Sub-Agency has made a determined effort to contact the immigrants arriving from central Europe, with the object of placing in their hands a copy of the Gospel in their own tongue, as well as one of the same Gospel portion in Spanish, their adopted language.

The complete New Testament in Aymara, spoken by the Indians living in the region of Lake Titicaca (Peru-Bolivia), is at present in the hands of the printers and it is hoped that it will be ready for circulation early next year.

Scotland

The annual report of the *National Bible Society of Scotland* for 1949 includes the following statement, showing some of the missionary editions planned and the loss that has to be carried by the Society on each edition :

Language and price to purchaser	Number on order	Cost, including freight	Recoverable selling price less commission	Loss carried by the Society
		s. d.	s. d.	
Biza Lala Teatament, 2s. 6d. ...	25,000	4 9	1 11	£3,500
Efik Bible, 4s. 6d.	75,000	6 9	3 5	£12,600
Efik Testament, 2s. 6d. ...	45,000	5 0	1 11	£7,000
Gaelic Family Bible, 6s. ...	30,000	8 2	6 0	£3,300
Gaelic Pocket Bible, 3s. 9d. ...	25,000	4 4	3 9	£700
Luba Sanga Bible, 4s. 6d. ...	30,000	6 8	3 5	£4,900
Nyanja Bible, 4s. 6d.	125,000	6 3	3 5	£17,700
Tonga Testament, 2s. 6d. ...	15,000	4 9	1 11	£2,100
Tumbuka Testament, 2s. 6d. ...	20,000	3 3	1 11	£1,300
Portions in various African languages, 6d.	42,000	0 7	0 4½	£400
			Total loss to be	
Total Number on order ...	432,000		carried by Society	£53,500

About 4,000 people, in all parts of Scotland, give their time and energy to the collecting of the Society's funds, or to acting as auxiliary secretaries or treasurers.

*

The Kikuyu Old Testament is now in proof form, as well as the complete Bemba Bible and the Efik Old Testament.

*

The N.B.S.S. has included for the first time in its annual report a Prayer Calendar, suggesting prayer items for each day of the month related to the work of the N.B.S.S., and of sister Bible Societies. One day is also devoted to the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES.

*

The N.B.S.S. has issued an illustrated publicity booklet entitled " Each In His Own Language," and showing in a vivid way what Scots people have done through the activity of the N.B.S.S. to repay the debt Scotland has incurred in receiving the Scriptures in the languages of her own people. A longer section is devoted to the problems of translation and experiences made therein.

Switzerland

Romansch is one of the four national languages of Switzerland, but it is spoken by only a few thousand people. An appeal has been launched for the raising of funds to print a Romansch Bible in a revised translation. Bible Societies and churches have responded generously, although the expected total expense is not yet covered.

*

Mr. Karl Uhl, Secretary of the Austrian Bible Committee, has been the guest speaker at the annual meeting of the Basle Bible Society. He spoke about the work of distributing the Bible in Austria.

*

Miss Suzanne de Dietrich has given a new and entirely revised edition of her book " Le Renouveau Biblique," published two years ago in Switzerland with the collaboration of the World Council of Churches, and since translated into several languages.

The book is divided into four main sections, the first explaining what the Bible is, what it means and contains, and what place it has in the main confessions ; the second giving a short survey of the expansion of the Bible in the world—with a chapter on the work of the Bible Societies and on the U.B.S.—and of its meaning for Christian unity ; the third suggesting methods of Bible study ; and the fourth proposing sample plans and questionnaires.

United States of America

The *American Bible Society* is launching a special appeal for help to Japan, where 3 million Scriptures have to be printed this year and 5 million next year. The target aimed at is $500,000, which will be needed for purchasing the necessary raw material to be sent to Japan. A so-called " Good Will Book " is going to include all the signatures of donors and will be presented to a representative of the Japanese people in an appropriate ceremony next November.

*

The Gospel of Luke in illustrated 32 page magazine format has been published by the A.B.S. with many illustrations, showing Palestinian landscapes and scenes from everyday life in that country. The edition runs to 500,000 copies.

*

The A.B.S. is starting the printing in Spanish Braille of the Psalms, Proverbs and Song of Solomon, and of the Gospel of John in Shilluk (Anglo-Egyptian Sudan).

*

36,000 Dutch Gospels of John have been sent by the A.B.S. to the Netherlands Bible Society.

*

A new pamphlet, entitled " How to Use the Scriptures in Evangelism " has been published by the A.B.S. Plans tested by wide experience are proposed under the following headings ; Preparation for evangelism ; Community evangelism ; In public meetings ; Visitation evangelism and Continuous evangelism. These practical hints are founded on a basic certitude, which a well-known minister in evangelistic circles expressed in this way :

" The most important part of soul-winning is using the Bible properly. Many an interview with a lost person has been weak or failed altogether, because the Scriptures were not presented."

The following is taken from this new pamphlet :

"When individual churches co-operate in community evangelism, they are able to find a bond of unity in the Bible which draws them closer together in the pursuit of the task. In preparation for the campaign the ministers may select the same Gospel or other Book and preach preparatory sermons from it. The people are then asked to read the same Gospel at the time of this inter-church preaching on passages from that Book. People may be invited to offer questions, while newspapers print daily readings from the selected Gospel.

" ' I believe in One-Book Evangelistic Meetings, ' reports an experienced leader. ' We select one Book of the New Testament from which to find all the messages. We order from a nearby American Bible Society Office enough of the little paper bound Portions to give to every person who attends, and to distribute to every person visited.' "

Roman Catholicism and the Bible

Belgium

The Publishing Department of the Abbey of Maredsous has issued the first edition of the new Roman Catholic translation of the Bible made by the Benedictine monks of that Abbey. It was printed on India paper, size 15 by 22cm., type memphis 10, 1,800 pages. The translation has been made from the original texts, and is an attempt to render them into ordinary modern French. The editors say that they aimed at realising in French what has been done in English by Mgr. Knox in his new translation of the Bible. The introduction and notes were prepared by a group of priests under the direction of Dom Célestin Charlier, professor of Holy Scripture in the Abbey of Maredsous.

Within a few months, more than 10,000 copies of this Bible have been sold and the editors are considering the publication of another cheaper edition, smaller in size and type, to be ready in January, 1951.

France

The Roman Catholic magazine " La Vie Catholique Illustrée " has again published, as a supplementary issue, an illustrated Gospel in the translation made from the Greek by Father Gourbillon, a Dominican. The Gospel of John has been chosen and it is illustrated with reproductions of famous paintings, representing scenes from the life of Christ.

■

By the end of May, subscriptions had been received for 35,000 copies of the Roman Catholic missionary edition of the Bible which is being printed in Lille at the instigation of Cardinal Liénart, and under the auspices of the " Ligue Catholique de l'Evangile." Fifty copies have been ordered from one village of less than 450 inhabitants. The translation used is that of Pirot and Clamer. Introductions and notes have been prepared by a group of scholars under the direction of Canon Renard of the theological faculty in Lille.

This Bible will not be sold through the book trade. Subscribers are asked to pay 300 French francs in advance and about 200 francs more on receipt. (The selling price of the Bible issued by the Bible Societies varies between 350-480 French francs for the popular edition.)

*

Syria

The Bible Society agency in Beirut is printing an edition of 10,000 copies of the Jesuit Arabic Bible, without Apocrypha, notes or comments. The edition will appear with the Roman Catholic *imprimatur*.

United Bible Societies

Invited on a decision of the Standing Committee to become Vice-President of the United Bible Societies, the Rt. Rev. C. K. Jacob, Bishop of Central Travancore (South India,) has accepted this appointment and writes in his letter :

" I am very much interested to hear of the plans and programme of the work of the World Fellowship of Bible Societies and am thrilled at the prospect that this fellowship will be a major unifying force in Christendom. For when the Word of God as contained in the Holy Scriptures is witnessed to in the spiritual experience of the Church, there will be a tremendous vitality and new life. I pray that this Fellowship may be the means of revitalising all Christendom."

*

The Rev. W. H. Hudspeth, General Secretary of the B.F.B.S. in Canada has been asked to represent the United Bible Societies as fraternal delegate at the meeting of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches in Toronto.

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The B.F.B.S. in Canada has been asked by the organisers of the World Convention of the World Council of Christian Education to prepare a stand on Bible Society work and Mr. Hudspeth writes that the emphasis of the exhibit will be on the U.B.S. Material for this display in French and German, two of the official languages of the conference, is being sent from France, Belgium and Germany (East and West.)

World Circulation by National Bible Societies, 1949

In several instances the figures given correspond to a ten month period only—from 1st January to 31st October : this is due to the reorganisation of the B.F.B.S. accountancy system. The A.B.S. figures cover a complete year, but are calculated from 1st November, 1948 to 31st October, 1949.

It should also be noted that five of the totals are not split up into Bibles, Testaments and Portions, so that if the Grand Totals are added across there is a difference of 1,055,691 in the last column.

Country	Bibles	Testaments	Portions	Total
AFRICA :				
North	1,578	2,922	19,402	23,902
South	127,693	61,251	46,645	235,589
East	—	—	—	199,746
West	4,621	2,864	3,906	11,391
Equatorial	—	—	—	138,855
ANGLO-EGYPTIAN SUDAN	389	364	12,418	13,171
ARABIA	See Iraq			
ARGENTINE...	28,515	37,180	315,762	381,457
AUSTRALIA	38,375	19,101	104,239	161,715
AUSTRIA	4,673	6,328	25,917	36,918
BELGIUM	5,251	5,451	21,871	32,573
BOLIVIA	3,828	7,443	32,612	43,883
BRAZIL	110,566	116,838	1,087,384	1,314,788
BULGARIA	9	1,201	10,758	11,968
BURMA	2,948	1,994	11,977	16,919
CANADA	66,991	37,959	136,660	241,610
CANAL ZONE	2,324	1,851	5,583	9,758
CHILE	10,311	23,654	114,752	148,717
CHINA	86,759	106,462	2,491,041	2,684,262
COLOMBIA	4,343	6,486	129,501	140,330
COSTA RICA...	1,310	2,144	19,760	23,214
CUBA	9,800	11,731	114,690	136,221
CYPRUS	528	1,759	2,465	4,752
CZECHOSLOVAKIA ...	—	—	—	55,000
DENMARK	14,045	57,884	60,212	132,141
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC ...	710	200	101,000	101,910
ECUADOR	1,972	2,971	30,389	35,332
EGYPT	6,669	10,195	61,168	78,032
ENGLAND & WALES ...	245,739	1,310,492	187,814	1,744,045
Miscellaneous from London	—	—	—	593,090
ERITREA	52	120	126	298
ETHIOPIA	1,651	993	9,310	11,954
FINLAND	13,841	29,897	3,932	47,670
FRANCE	32,093	38,336	84,212	154,641
GERMANY	316,689	260,032	130,556	707,277
GREECE	2,544	189,243	29,753	221,540
GUATEMALA	4,496	4,680	62,682	71,858
HAITI	2,326	1,384	11,504	15,214
HONDURAS	1,067	816	13,871	15,754
HUNGARY	27,805	26,044	26,987	80,836
ICELAND (N.B.S.S. only) ...	704	400	1,560	2,664
INDIA, PAKISTAN AND CEYLON	25,956	29,958	583,346	639,260
INDONESIA	3,501	45,256	28,356	77,113
IRAQ & ARABIA	842	766	5,125	6,733
IRELAND	4,749	13,011	33,135	50,895
ISRAEL & JORDAN ...	826	1,392	3,068	5,286
ITALY	4,443	9,198	27,277	40,918
JAPAN	34,633	473,185	1,410,660	1,918,478
KOREA	6,240	58,195	319,716	384,151
MALAYA	8,410	3,035	72,186	83,631
MEXICO	21,019	17,122	60,741	98,882

Country	Bibles	Testaments	Portions	Total
MONGOLIA	Included in China.			
NETHERLANDS	65,725	47,920	26,366	140,011
NEW ZEALAND	13,743	6,345	21,047	41,135
NICARAGUA...	940	1,292	14,270	16,502
NORWAY	—	—	—	69,000
PACIFIC ISLANDS... ... (A.B.S. only)	2,155	1,190	500	3,845
PANAMA	2,078	1,379	9,556	13,013
PARAGUAY	1,609	3,841	2,539	7,989
PERSIA	649	932	29,322	30,903
PERU	14,664	19,104	63,969	97,737
PHILIPPINES	21,394	7,452	26,676	55,522
POLAND	28,910	12,839	133,435	175,184
PORTUGAL	3,182	4,275	67,221	74,678
PUERTO RICO	7,287	11,684	70,332	89,303
RHODESIAS	17,645	49,255	27,178	94,078
SALVADOR	1,757	2,528	33,600	37,885
SCOTLAND	45,138	85,250	44,991	175,379
SIAM	202	636	218,210	219,048
SOMALILANDS	1	40	25	66
SPAIN...	1,611	2,004	8,715	12,330
SWEDEN	9,919	19,916	3,607	33,442
SWITZERLAND ... ... (German part only)	21,628	5,342	3,953	30,923
SYRIA & LEBANON ...	3,332	3,161	39,892	46,385
TURKEY	397	1,134	12,538	14,069
U.S.A.	308,402	436,246	3,983,040	4,727,688
URUGUAY	3,413	2,246	23,542	29,201
VENEZUELA	6,206	4,513	106,362	117,081
VIRGIN ISLANDS	—	—	25	25
WEST INDIES (British) ...	18,089	7,214	54,966	80,269
Grand Totals	1,893,910	3,777,526	13,091,906	19,819,033
1947 Figures	1,462,453	3,259,744	9,005,811	14,108,436
1948 „	1,709,257	2,128,070	10,683,171	17,505,484

It must be remembered that although the foregoing circulation figures are given under countries, for most of them the work is not done by national Societies but by agencies of the larger Bible Societies. Even if the work is done by a national Society, in many cases they are greatly supported by foreign help. The figures below show approximately what part the main " missionary " Bible Societies had in this total world circulation in 1949 :—

Society	Bibles	Testaments	Portions	Total
A.B.S.	574,931	923,034	7,324,915	8,822,880
B.F.B.S. (inc. B.F.B.S. Australia, Canada & N. Zealand)	835,732	1,972,003	3,424,841	7,058,869*
N.B.S.S.	159,466	262,479	729,010	1,150,955
NETHERLANDS B.S. ...	67,125	66,023	37,708	170,856

* This figure includes some totals which are not split up into Bibles, Testaments, and Portions, and is therefore larger than the sum of the 3 preceding figures.

Miscellaneous

According to information released by U.N.E.S.C.O., the present world population is about 2,351,123,000, distributed as follows :

193,359,000 in Africa
210,908,000 in North America
105,295,000 in South America
1,247,731,000 in Asia
581,642,000 in Europe
12,188,000 in Oceania

The world circulation of daily newspapers is about 218,764,700 and it is estimated that there is :

one for 10 people in Africa.
one for 3-4 people in North America.
one for 14 people in South America.
one for 45 people in Asia.
one for 4-5 people in Europe.
one for 3-4 people in Oceania.

THE BIBLE IN JAPAN TODAY

ERIC M. NORTH

TO all persons concerned with the effective spread of the Scriptures among great populations, the opportunity in Japan is one of the most important in the world to-day. This country of some 70,000,000 people is open to the influence of the Scriptures as never before. Many factors are responsible for this great opportunity. A proud people, secure in their own culture, have suffered the bitter experience of complete defeat. The vaunted national religion of Shintoism has been deflated by the Emperor's statement that he was not divine. The economic difficulties press with great severity upon hundreds of thousands of families, so that anxiety for the future is very prevalent. The occupying forces, instead of being cruel and vindictive, have proved in the main to be friendly and constructive, and curiosity is aroused as to the source of such a morality on the part of a conqueror. It is known that Christianity is the general religion of the conquerors and the witness of Christians and missionaries through three generations has produced some consciousness of the Christian's Book. Thus, among the 70,000,000 people of whom less than 1% are related to the Christian Church, there is a receptivity to the Gospel when it is brought to them.

Some indication of this is afforded by the fact that the Bible Societies, principally the American and British, working through the Japan Bible Society, issued in Japan in the four years after the end of the war approximately 4,000,000 Scriptures, of which 159,000 were Bibles, 2,000,000 were New Testaments and 1,800,000 were Gospels. Far and away the largest part of these Scriptures have been sold and they are spread far and wide over Japan. Observers report frequently seeing people on trains and tramcars reading the Testaments and they are even to be found in the distant fishing villages.

The Bible Society work in Japan rests upon a foundation of many years. As early as 1837, Charles Gutzlaff made the first translation of a Gospel into the Japanese language he had learned from ship-wrecked sailors who passed

through Macao, but this translation did not succeed in making its way into Japan. After the opening of Japan in 1857, or shortly after, missionary work began there with Scripture translation as a large part of the early effort. The first New Testament appeared in 1879 and the first whole Bible in 1887.

The Bible Societies which had assisted the work from the beginning had already established agencies and from 1903 the American Bible Society served northern and eastern Japan, and the British & Foreign Bible Society and the National Bible Society of Scotland southern and western Japan. The operations of the Societies were amalgamated under a Joint Advisory Committee in 1937 and in 1938 the Japan Bible Society was formed by the establishment of a Board of Directors. The Bible House erected by the American Bible Society in 1933 was transferred to the Japan Bible Society in 1941, the British & Foreign Bible Society having sold their building in Kobe in the consolidation of the work.

The Japan Bible Society at present works under a very representative Board of Directors of leading clergymen and laymen from the principal denominations. The staff is headed by the Rev. Tsunetaro Miyakoda, a Methodist minister, as General Secretary, and Mr. T. Tanaka, who has been in Bible Society work since 1913, as Associate General Secretary. The Rev. M. Imaizumi is the President of the Board.

The work is systematically and comprehensively organised and the whole force, aided by some three score colporteurs, are vigorously engaged in the effort to achieve the goals of the three-year plan of distribution. The first of these was accomplished in 1949, with the issuing of nearly 2,000,000 Scriptures. The goal for 1950 is 3,000,000 and for 1951, 5,000,000. General Douglas MacArthur, who has viewed the circulation of the Scriptures in Japan as a matter of great importance in laying the foundations for a new moral order, has urged that the effort continue until at least 30,000,000 Scriptures have been distributed. The Chief of Chaplains, Colonel Ivan L. Bennett, is one of the enthusiastic and most helpful counsellors of the work.

In the period immediately following the war, it was not possible to secure adequate production in Japan and most of the Scriptures distributed were printed by the American Bible Society in America. It has now become possible to purchase for dollars adequate supplies of paper in Japan and, as printing facilities are sufficient, the production is now all being done in Japan.

The Japan Bible Society has a very sound plan for the development in each *ken*, or county, of an Advisory Committee of Christians who will sponsor one or more employed colporteurs. Each of these colporteurs is to have associated with him a group of volunteer helpers for the distribution.

One of the marks of the interest in the Scriptures in Japan is the fact that overwhelmingly the Scriptures issued have been sold, although the prices have necessarily been kept proportionately low because of the economic limitations upon personal and family income. Another significant indication is the considerable number of Bible classes that are being carried on, not only in churches but in banks, municipal offices, department stores, hospitals and other institutions. Many pastors conduct two or three such classes. In some cases, classes for the study of English use English Scriptures as the basis of teaching.

One finds it difficult to appraise the direction which the expansion of Christianity in Japan is likely to take, but it is not likely that there will be,

for many years at least, the equivalent of the mass movements that have occurred in other countries. It is quite possible, however, that the spreading of the Scriptures as a leaven throughout the length and breadth of the land may deeply influence the currents of Japanese thought and life and eventually result in a great expansión of the churches.

It must be remembered that the opportunity in Japan is the more significant because of the literate character of the people. It is perhaps fair to say that Japan has the largest literate, non-Christian people in the world reading one language. What a great opportunity for the Bible !

THE KOREAN TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE AND THE KOREAN LANGUAGE

Young Bin Im

At the time when Christianity was first introduced into Korea, about 68 years ago, the Korean language was despised by the Koreans themselves. This may sound strange, but it is a fact.

The wonderful Korean alphabet was regarded as the alphabet which women and the lower classes should learn, but not literate and higher class people. At that time, women were considered as inferior beings. The Chinese characters were the ones which literate and higher class people were to learn. These Chinese characters were known as " chin-su " (true letters) and the Korean alphabet was called " un-moon " (letters for lower class people).

But suddenly this despised language was uplifted and its value and dignity highly recognised. This was the work of the Christian religion. When this religion put its sacred words into Korean, this language was raised to its rightful position. The literate and higher class people saw this and dubbed the Christian religion as a religion for " sang-nom " (outcasts), since it employed the letters for lower class people to express its sacred truths. But they were surprised when they saw that this religion for " sang-nom " made great changes among the people. The national consciousness was awakened by this and a new learning and cultural enlightenment were introduced. People began to esteem the Christian religion and through reading the Bible they discovered not only the truths of the Christian religion, but also how wonderful their own language was.

The Korean translation of the Bible brought a revolution in learning and language to the nation. It was a revolution that such a book as the Bible could be printed entirely in Korean letters, without using a single Chinese character, and it was a revolution for the people to realise that they could express any ideas and descriptions whatever in their own language. All kinds of literature began to pour out in Korean and the result was a renaissance.

The Korean translation of the Bible not only made the people discover the value and dignity of their own language, but it also preserved the life of the Korean language during the Japanese occupation. Forty years of Japanese occupation in Korea was a period of persecution for the Korean language, and the last decade of the occupation especially witnessed to the fact that the Japanese government was determined to murder our language. The Japanese taught the grade school children that their mother tongue was a

foreign tongue, and that Japanese was to be their mother language. At that time, any Korean who could master Japanese felt great pride and thought himself superior. Japanese was spoken at all public meetings and was used in all official correspondence. The Japanese government made a great effort to force people to use Japanese in their homes ; but it was in the Christian pulpit that Korean was spoken without a sense of shame, and it was in the Bible Society that the Korean language was printed in quantity and without restriction. Near the end of the war the Japanese realised that if the Bible Society were permitted to exist, its policy of extinguishing the language would fail, and so all kinds of pressure were put upon the Society. But although they might be successful in killing the work of the Bible Society, yet the Korean Bible could still be found in London and New York, and it would be printed in London and New York. In fact, after the war was over, Korean New Testaments were printed in New York and Korean Bibles were printed in London. So long as the Bible lives, the language also lives. Thus the Korean translation of the Bible helped to preserve the language throughout the period of storm and stress.

After the liberation of the nation in 1945, the Bible was the only book that was printed 100,000 copies at a time and distributed all over the country. In this way it helped the propagation of the language. It helped the circulation of the life-blood of the language, so that it could have a chance to survive. It also helped not to restrict the speaking of Korean to a certain area.

One more point that I would like to mention is that the Korean translation of the Bible helped to standardize the language all over the country. Korea is a small country, but there are many dialects. One who lives in the southern part of the country cannot understand the conversation of one who lives in the northern part. The standard language of Korea is the dialect spoken in the Seoul area, and the Bible is translated into that standard language. Wherever the Bible is read, and by whomsoever it is read, the standard language is learned. This means that the Bible purifies the dialects of the country and unifies both the language and the national tie. National unity and patriotism are secured through the Bible.

These facts are all well recognised and highly appreciated in Korea.

The publication and distribution of the Scriptures in Korea was started by the British and Foreign Bible Society in 1898. The first Korean translation of the Gospel of Luke was made in 1884 by the Rev. Ross, a missionary of the Scottish Presbyterian Church, with the help of a Korean convert, Mr. Suh Sang Yun. The American Bible Society also opened its work in Korea in 1908. From 1919, by mutual agreement, the work was carried on solely by the British and Foreign Bible Society.

During World War II, Japanese pressure forced the B.F.B.S. to withdraw from its work in Korea and the Korean Bible Society was organised in 1940, under the close supervision of the Japanese police. After the liberation, the Korean Bible Society was also liberated and its work is now being carried on in close co-operation with the sister Societies—the B.F.B.S., the A.B.S. and the National Bible Society of Scotland.

I feel I have omitted several important facts in this brief survey, but I would like it to be read with the understanding that it is only a skeleton of the history.

COLPORTAGE WORK AND BIBLE CRUSADE CAMPAIGNS IN PERU

JOHN H. TWENTYMAN

ALTHOUGH the extremely rugged nature of the Peruvian Andes makes the land of the Incas geographically one of the most difficult in the world through which the Bible Society colporteur must travel, there are few areas of the coastal or mountainous sections of the Republic where he has not gone with the Book of Life.

For almost fifty years the Society has maintained a small but consecrated staff of national colporteurs, oftentimes assisted by foreign missionaries, who have willingly suffered sacrifice and persecution for the sake of carrying the Gospel to those who have been kept in spiritual darkness for so long. The fact that frequently the foreign missionary has either undertaken this work on his own or accompanied the nationals on colportage trips has undoubtedly served to impress on the native Christian in general the supreme importance of Bible distribution and the responsibility that rests upon each one of testifying to his fellows of the Saviour's love. In Peru the national has had this healthy example set before him, which he has frequently followed, however imperfectly, within the confines of his own village. On the other hand, the writer has had experience of fields where, because the missionary has not stressed the importance of Scripture distribution, neither has the national Christian been greatly concerned about it. This experience would indicate that the national's outlook on, and estimation of the Bible is still largely governed by that of the missionary.

The faithful work done by the Peruvian colporteur and national Christians down through the years cannot be questioned, but naturally their work has not usually been systematically planned ; considerable sections of the community are still untouched—and there remains a large unfinished task. Furthermore, although the national has been taught that *he* has a definite spiritual responsibility towards his fellow-countrymen, it is a responsibility which he often finds difficult to fulfil if left to his own initiative. In order to help him discharge this obligation and satisfactorily cover a given territory with the Gospel, the idea of carrying out a Bible Crusade Campaign has been conceived. Such a campaign was started in Northern Peru about six years ago. It has since been extended to other parts of the Republic with very gratifying results.

Briefly the method used is the following : a particular church or set of churches assumes responsibility for undertaking the Crusade in a given town or area. The town is then divided into sections ; two of the church members who volunteer to help are allocated a certain section, which it is their duty to visit systematically, calling on each family in the area assigned to them, and taking with them the Scriptures as well as Christian tracts. If there is any interest shown in spiritual matters by the one visited, a word of prayer may be in order and the Bible or a New Testament will probably be sold ; if there is no response, the callers must pass on to the next house, but before doing so, some tracts and a Gospel portion are left gratis. Naturally, the names and addresses of those interested should be noted down and contact with them maintained through later visits which will probably eventually lead to their attendance at the local church services. Also a strict account should be kept of all Scriptures sold and of tracts and portions given away.

If the Crusade is done carefully and prayerfully, seeking God's guidance and blessing in each step, encouraging results are sure to follow. The writer recently had the opportunity of speaking to the resident missionary in a district that had been covered by the Bible Crusade over two years ago, who said that he was witnessing a great spiritual awakening which he personally attributed directly to the work of the Crusade. It will be observed that in this particular case it took two years for the Seed to bear fruit.

It is our hope that this extension of colportage work carried on, as it is, voluntarily by the national Christians themselves may be employed in other parts of Peru, for besides fulfilling the Lord's command " to preach the Gospel to every creature," it has the distinct advantage of offering to the nationals the opportunity of having a much greater share in the responsibility of evangelising their own people than has previously been attempted, thus strengthening and establishing them in their own spiritual life, as well as preparing them to assume greater responsibilities in the government of the Church, which in the last analysis should be a Church maintained and governed by the national Christians themselves.

THE MISSIONARY - COLPORTEUR

René Cruse

(*Extracts translated from the French by Beryl Guy.*)

In the first section of his paper Mr. Cruse deals with colportage work in the past and its significance in evangelistic work in France. In contrast to the somewhat individualistic conception of colportage, he now presents a more ecclesiastical aspect of this work, officially recognised and supported by the Church, and attempts to define the functions of such a colporteur and his status in the Church.

Mr. Cruse does not deny the possibility and the " success " of " independent " colportage, but his aim is to find a way by which the work of the missionay-colporteur can be recognised as a ministry in the Church ; furthermore, he would limit his study to colportage work in the towns.

His Functions

Our conception of the work of the colporteur is somewhat different from the traditional : not as a work that remains in one place, as one might perhaps be led to think, nor on the other hand as a work throughout the whole of France which, from the point of view of colportage, seems to us entirely irrational. Our thought is that the missionary-colporteur should always be a parish colporteur ; it is in such surroundings that he could function to the fullest extent ; for himself personally, he would have the great advantage of partaking in the life of the parish in the quality of a layman, and of enjoying the presence of the Church-services, Bible studies, etc . . . . . He would be responsible for the leadership of colportage in its true sense in the public squares, with and without a stall ; he would also be responsible for a bookstall providing spiritual food for a whole flock which, in the best of cases, does not meet regularly as a whole more than once a week ; he would take charge of a parish library, subscribing to religious periodicals, and he would need to be fully informed about the latest books which have been published (and there are some excellent ones.) He would also be the person to see that the bookshops in his town were supplied with Bibles. His field of activity could, moreover

be extended far beyond his parish, to all the neighbouring churches which might need a helping hand occasionally. If he is to be a parish colporteur, he must belong to one of the big parishes, since they are better able to employ him fully. Looked at in this perspective, it might not be necessary to have more than about twenty colporteurs at present in France, but they would need to be recognised and installed in their ministry.

Methods of Work

As for door-to-door colportage, we consider that this is becoming more and more impossible, at least in the big cities. The end of the war has found the sects multiplying again and these are generally very strong in the art of colportage. If the members of these sects were distributing the Bible, we would be the first to rejoice ; unfortunately this is not the case : they knock at all doors, selling philanthropic books or vegetarian recipes (Adventists) ; a Bible colporteur following on after such is generally ill received. A woman once said to me, when she saw me with a Bible : " Oh, so that's the new religion !" and burst out laughing, showing me a little brochure in which Jesus Christ is compared to an onion . . . . . Looked at in this light, colportage becomes very difficult, or in any case very ineffective. That is why we prefer to confine ourselves to fairs, exhibitions, cemetry gates, the open air, bookshops and church bookstalls. In exceptional cases we would consider door-to-door colportage, but on condition of being at least two together, according to our Lord's command.

But the most important thing is the spiritual preparation which such an effort demands. A colporteur may be able to manage alone, in the markets, but at exhibitions some active people from the parish must get to work and give all their prayer support to the work of evangelisation on the fair ground. With the colporteur, they should make sure that there is some continuity, for it sometimes happens that the colporteur becomes engaged in too many conversations for him to be able to give enough time to everybody. This raises the question of recruiting team members, when pastors and colporteurs cannot be too strict in their selection. The goodwill of parishioners is never sufficient in itself ; it needs a certain technique, tact, a fairly extensive knowledge of the Bible, as well as a fund of general knowledge and information on the latest trends of contemporary thought. We have sometimes had quite delightful helpers, who were utterly incompetent and frightened off the first arrival. This is, however, a question of discernment, that is to say of the Holy Spirit, for we must ask for His presence.

Necessary Qualifications

We can never repeat too often that it is God alone Who qualifies His servants, but this does not prevent us from seeing, under His guidance, how these men can best be prepared to meet their neighbours. We cannot be satisfied with " showman's patter," nor do we wish to hear that "five francs is not dear to know Jesus Christ," as if our Lord could be purchased with money. We must have men with an *easy manner of contact* and with a sure faith, who are as well-informed about the paying of bookshop bills by post cheque account, as they are about some delicate point of doctrine, such as baptism, for instance. They may not need to be theologians of the calibre of a Karl Barth, but we need colporteurs who will not cradle their listeners on illusions about the immortality of the soul, in the manner of the platonic school. (This remark goes for pastors too !) In practical teaching, a solid study of the sects can but serve a useful purpose. To sum up, the colporteur, colporteur as he is

cannot take the liberty of saying anything to anybody. He should be constantly clarifying his faith and formulating it in intelligible terms, which is no easy matter. Finally, for his evangelistic campaigns, he must have the opportunity for being refreshed ; and for this reason he should be helped to attend gatherings of pastors and camp-retreats. But let us beware of going beyond our scope and seeking to draw up a programme ! Let God direct and let the Church pray, and light will come.

A Ministry in the Church

We do not consider that the presence of the colporteur in the Church is a luxury, as has already been said, but that he is a present necessity. Perhaps our manner of looking at the question will leave the door open to see the usefulness of other ministries (women, assistants, etc.) It may also be that we have gone completely astray as to the final consequences of the Church taking a position officially in this matter . . . . . This is only a study, and a study which should be made more profound. Our Church has certainly failed to see that colportage is a true vocation for some ; this is a sin against God.

We end with a story to illustrate the point. A very well-intentioned and evangelical pastor recently announced from the pulpit : " At the door our friend, colporteur X., who has come a long way, will offer you some of his books for sale. Encourage him by buying them, so that his case will be less heavy " . . . . . He was thus asking alms for the servant of God who certainly had a heavy case, but who, in his heart of hearts, desired only one thing : to feed a flock with spiritual food ; who only thought of one thing : the salvation of souls, and was praying that the Kingdom might come soon. The dear pastor, his friend, had no idea how much his announcement had hurt the colporteur, and how, at the same time, it was deceiving the Church as to the specific mission of this particular servant.

THE NEW HOUR OF THE GERMAN BIBLE SOCIETIES

Oskar Söhngen

(*Extracts translated from the German by Beryl Guy*)

The Question

THE great age of most of the Bible Societies falls in the first decades of the nineteenth century, in the age of the revival movement from which they also sprang. It would certainly show a lack of gratitude to succeeding generations, if we were to deny that they also achieved things of the greatest importance for foreign mission work, for Biblical scholarship, and for the revision of the text of the Bible. But the fact remains that it was the " *Innere Mission* " which, from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards, took up the concern for the circulating of the Bible, which had been the *raison d'être* of the Bible Societies, and then sought to effect the distribution of the Scriptures by a great impetus and by using the whole range of means at its disposal, whether through the spoken or printed word, or through action. Did not this mean that a special missionary activity of the Bible Societies had become redundant ? And even although some special tasks still remained to the Bible Societies : such as colportage, which has, to be sure, been so far largely refused by the German Bible Societies, but could gain growing importance amongst an ever-increasingly dechristianised people, or the arranging of Bible days in the various church circles, a task which the

Evangelische Haupt-Bibelgesellschaft has recently actively resumed ; nevertheless, taken as a whole, the question might well be raised as to whether the Bible Societies are still necessary for the distribution of the Bible, at a time when every pastor counts this task as one of the most urgent duties of his office.

But then one might point, on the other side, to the key position which the Bible Societies still hold to-day in the printing of the Bible in its various editions. Are not they the guardians of the life-producing Word of God, without which there would be no life in the power of the Holy Spirit and no Christian communities or Church ? But this does not get us away from the fact (for which we are grateful) that, in the meantime, other forces have awakened which have taken the responsibility of the Bible Societies on to their own shoulders, and made it the responsibility of the whole Church. Questions on the printing and text of the Bible can no longer be decided by the Bible Societies alone, and close co-operation between them and the official Church is therefore taken for granted to-day. The recent conflict over the revision of the Luther text of the New Testament again made that apparent to wide circles. In this respect, the Bible Societies have also increasingly become an organ of the official Church. In view of this development can we still even speak of an independent task and responsibility for the Bible Societies ?

Re-discovery of the Bible.

The Bible Societies, as we have already said, are a child of the revival movement at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The circles which carried the revival movement dared, at a time when the cult of autocratic reason was at its height, to put the Word of God on the throne again and they did so, because their heart had been struck by this Word, by its judging and obedience-commanding claims and by its message of comfort and blessing. They had been confronted—and the biography of each individual shows by what a way of grace they had come—with the Word of Life itself, and had experienced it as existential truth, that is, as the truth for life and death.

To-day, 135 years later, the Church can look back upon similar temptations and assaults from which she has escaped by the grace of God, and to-day, as then, it was the same weapon with which the Church mastered the forces of evil : the Word of God. The Church conflict which was at first fought internally against the enemies within, but soon developed into a clash with a National-Socialist State seeking to enthrone its myth of race, blood and earth, was kindled by the profession of faith of the Church. But since the profession of the Church points on to the Word of God as the standard, the *norma normans*, it was inevitable that, as time went on, the Scriptures became more and more definitely the shibboleth under which the conflict was waged : National Socialism declared war upon the Word of God and its claim upon body, soul and spirit, as well as its rejection of all idolatry—reason enough to arm oneself with the Word of God. Churches came into being " under the sound of the Word." Dusty Bibles were taken off the shelf and the Word suddenly testified again to its prophetic gift of declaring the signs of the times and its power to beat off all the assaults of Satan, nay even to break victorious into his kingdom and snatch the prey from him, to its overruling truth in judgment and grace and to its power to build community and church into the corporate body of believers. A later record of history will have to describe and do justice to the Church conflict from the most varied aspects. For our line of thought, however, it is important for us to understand it as one of the greatest Bible movements which God has given to our people. The respectful distance at which the Word of God is kept and which seems to be characteristic of the

quiet periods of the Church, was lost under the hardship of tribulation. And so, there were no wearying and unfruitful debates about verbal inspiration—those are problems of bare theory, as seen from the perspective of the onlooker. Essentially there were two things : that in the Word, the Lord God speaks in His holiness and His compassionate love, and that *we* are in view—in view in such an inescapable way, that we cannot flee from this claim of God, and that we can never and nowhere fall from God's loving will. The overruling " existential " truth of the Word of God became great again to the Church of Jesus Christ, there was again a real encounter with the Word of God and in that encounter was enclosed the secret of the *raison d'être* for the *ecclesia viatorum*, the Church in her earthly pilgrimage, as for the individual in his calling and estate. From being a document on the history of religion, from being a deed, the Bible had again come to be of the highest actuality and reality and the Word of God went forth again.

With this, the hidden life of the Bible Societies, which had soon been covered over after the time of the first love, came to light again : to lead men, both inside and outside of the churches, to an encounter with the Word of God, with its overruling truth and its power of lighting up existence ; to an encounter with the effective Word which silences all questions of life and reveals to man the meaning of his life, the Word which at the same time gives him power to go through life, loving God and his neighbour, and which transforms, inspires and renews him from within. Only this aspect, or better, only this fundamentally decisive purpose of the Bible, can determine the work of the Bible Societies.

Pointers for Bible Society Work.

What concrete tasks arise out of this for the Bible Societies to-day ? First of all, the unceasing work on the original text of the Bible. For this the achievements of the *Württembergische Bibelanstalt* will always remain exemplary. This work must not stand still, as the recent Biblical discoveries have again made evident. The ever renewed determining and fixing of the original text is also the foundation for the work of the Bible Societies. They must take pains to make what comes to light available to the circle of those who are engaged in Biblical scholarship.

The second urgent task seems to me to be the modernisation of the Bible for the reader of to-day. Everything depends upon the modern reader meeting in the Bible the claims and words of the living God. Therefore, the process of revising the Luther text must not for one moment or under any circumstances, come to a halt, any more than it did during Luther's lifetime. But besides this, the Bible Societies must also make it their particular business to provide up-to-date translations of the Bible. The all too great familiarity with the sound of the Luther translation which has come to us from the days of our childhood, is often a hindrance to being confronted with the Word of God. Therefore, we need translations which allow us to hear the Word of God in a fresh way, which take effect. Very few know how actual, how pressing and how enlightening this Word is !

But in order to interpret this Word, commentaries on the individual books are needed. The provision of these is also among the tasks of the Bible Societies. We are not, of course, thinking here of works of self-sufficient erudition, but of books which attempt to introduce the reader of to-day to the Bible and to confront him with the Word of God in the Bible. We do not need to lose words over pointing out, that the men entrusted with the writing of

such commentaries should be so rooted and grounded in Biblical scholarship, that the effect can be felt everywhere, even if not actually mentioned.

And finally, the readers of the Bible need a guide to meditation. This is indispensable for the life in and with the Bible. Our Bible studies and Bible discussion groups will only develop into blessed fruitfulness from the centre and the depths of meditation. If the Bible Societies would provide the appropriate literature for this, they could do a service to our churches which cannot be too highly estimated and would at the same time give convincing proof of their own undiminished missionary power. Of course, this is mainly new ground and the tracks of all too untroubled, naïve-dilettante, earlier pioneering in this realm have a deterrent effect. But for this very reason, the best heads and the profoundest spirits should be made available for this important task.

Under these circumstances, is it saying too much, if we come to the conclusion that the Bible Societies are placed, by the grace of God, on the threshold of a new day of their activity? For who else could be called to advance and develop on all sides the making actual of the Word of God in the Bible, other than they who, by their name and by their work, have placed themselves in the service of the Book? And there can therefore be no finer good wish to the *Evangelische Haupt-Bibelgesellschaft zu Berlin* on the occasion of its 135th anniversary, than the call of the Lord with which he sends the Society out to-day, as before, into the world and into the churches:

"Arise .... for thou hast a long journey before thee."

THE BLIND, U.N.E.S.C.O. AND THE BIBLE SOCIETIES

Olivier Béguin

SEVEN million blind children and adults in the world to-day—that is the figure given by the most recent statistics.

From the sixteenth century onwards, attempts were made to find a method which would make it possible for blind people to read. It was not until between 1829 and 1834 that Louis Braille, himself blind and a professor at the institute for the blind in Paris, put the finishing touches to a system of relief lettering, which now bears his name. Concurrently, and in other countries, other methods were proposed and introduced, but in 1878 an international congress was held in Paris when a strong majority proved to be in favour of the generalisation of the Braille system.

The adaptation to foreign languages led to numerous divergencies in the systems of transposition adopted, and it took nearly half a century of debates and discussions, for instance, to arrive at the point of having a unified Braille system in all the English-speaking countries. The question has not yet been settled as far as Spanish is concerned and there is still chaos in Africa and Asia where there are, for example, seven adaptations of the Braille system in Arabic, eight in Indian languages, six in Chinese, etc.

U.N.E.S.C.O. had been asked by the Indian Government to organise a conference of experts with the object of establishing certain general principles which would facilitate the unification of the various systems of Braille

transcription. A preparatory meeting was held in December last and a general conference in March of this year.

The recommendations passed by the International Conference on Braille Uniformity state that a world Braille system is both desirable and practicable ; however, although full agreement was reached for Arabic and the ideographical languages (except Japanese, which will keep its own system), it is not yet certain whether the Indian Braille Committee will accept the world system or whether a unified Indian Braille system will be maintained. With a view to uniformity, it was also unanimously recommended that Braille should be read from left to right. The creation of a World Council is proposed. This Council would act as consultant on such questions and would collate and disseminate information about Braille. It was also strongly recommended that special consultations should be arranged for the unification of contracted Braille systems for each language, and if possible for languages belonging to a same group.

These recommendations have now been endorsed by the Conference of U.N.E.S.C.O. and regional conferences have been suggested for a detailed study of the problems related to a group of languages.

It should also be noted that U.N.E.S.C.O. submitted to the United Nations Organisation last year a proposal whereby equipment and books for the use of the blind should be exonerated from customs duties.

These developments are important for the work of the Bible Societies. At a very early date the Societies took a share in the publication of Gospels, New Testaments and then Bibles for the blind. For more than a century they have either published themselves, or given financial support to the printing of Scriptures for the blind ; moreover, when these books have not been given away entirely free of charge, they have always been sold at a price very much lower than cost price and sometimes, as in Japan even now, at a price lower than the postage on each volume.

In many cases in India, the Near and Far East, in Africa and elsewhere the Bible was the first, or one of the first books to be published for the blind, and for this reason the Bible Societies have always been very closely associated with the evolution of systems of printing for the blind.

The unification of systems in current use and the generalisation of an international Braille system would considerably simplify the problems which the Bible Societies have to face and would make it possible for them to reduce very greatly the expenses which the present multiplicity of systems makes extremely high. An enquiry as to whether the Bible Societies would be encouraged to send an observer to the latter met with the reply that the conference would discuss purely technical matters, and that the representation of a Christian organisation as such might endanger the success of the whole venture, by giving the impression that behind the genuine desire to standardise Braille systems lay the intention of giving support to western and/or Christian interests. Sir Clutha Mackenzie, who is fully aware of the interests and responsibilities of the Bible Societies in this realm, gave full assurance that he would not fail to bear them in mind and he was very grateful to have in hand a letter from the U.B.S., expressing the concern of the Bible Societies that effective standardisation of systems of Braille transcription be achieved.

The Bible Societies have published or helped to publish the whole Bible in eleven languages (some of which in two to four different systems), the New

Testament in some six other languages, the Old Testament in one language, while various books of the Bible have been published in about a further twenty-one languages.

Given the diversity of the manner in which distribution of Scriptures for the blind is carried out by the Bible Societies, it is not possible to draw up exact statistics. In so far as the Bible Societies themselves distributed the volumes for the blind, the circulation figure in 1948 was about 10,000 volumes. The figure for 1949 will probably be much the same.

The demand, however, seems to be greater than such figures would lead one to think. To quote only one example, the secretary of the Czechoslovak Bible Society writes as follows :

" No Scriptures are available in Czech or Slovak Braille at present. The last copies of St. John's Gospel were sold during the war. The edition was printed many years ago in London by the B.F.B.S.

" Our Committee has resolved to publish at least one Gospel in Braille and I have made many enquiries concerning the possibilities of the printing. But the issue was very sad : There are here two institutions for blind people which have printing presses, but both institutions are unable to do the printing because their machinery is out-of-date. They can scarcely print the Braille News and a few books for children. I could not find out how many blind people there are in the whole republic, but I was told that there are about 1,000 blind reading people and about 400 children in the schools for the blind. The demand for Braille Scriptures is great.

" Is there any possibility of help for us ? I hope that you will bear our needs in mind and do something for the poor blind in our country."

The British and Foreign Bible Society is at present printing the Gospel of St. Matthew in Persian Braille ; the Netherlands Bible Society recently published a Braille Gospel in Toba-Batta and is working on the publication of several portions in the new Dutch translation of the Bible ; the American Bible Society finished last year the publication of the Spanish New Testament in Braille ; the Danish Bible Society is at present having the Danish New Testament in the new translation adopted in June, 1948, printed in Braille. Between 1944 and 1949 this Society spent Kr.17,000 on the printing of Gospels for the blind and in 1946 the Finnish Bible Society gave Mk.75,000 to the society in Finland called " Friends of the Blind." A great effort has also been made by the American Bible Society to help other Societies to print Scriptures in Braille. Thus, special paper has been sent to the Bible Societies in Japan, Korea and Stuttgart (Germany).

Mention must also be made of the growing number of gramophone records—" talking books "—presenting a reading of the Word of God, which have been made by the American Bible Society. In 1948 more than 8,000 records of this kind were distributed. A very recent invention makes it possible to circulate records to-day which last for fifty minutes, and which have the reading of a whole Gospel on the two sides.

The American Bible Society, which is very active in this sphere, last year produced a film entitled " Thy Word giveth Light " in order to interest the public in the work of the Society in the realm of Scriptures for the blind.

In the multiplicity of urgent problems with which the Bible Societies have been faced in the post-war period, they have not always been able to give sufficient attention to the question of help for the blind. The con-

clusions at which the conference of experts, organised by U.N.E.S.C.O., arrives will no doubt contribute toward making this problem more topical, and let us hope it will help to put a little more order into the chaos of systems—a chaos which is in many respects embarrassing for the Bible Societies, but is even more prejudicial to the blind themselves, who thus find themselves put into categories and incapable of benefiting to the fullest extent from the efforts spent by all their friends to bring them out of their isolation.

At the conclusion of a letter on the subject of the blind, the secretary of the B.F.B.S. in Australia quotes the following episode, related to him by a correspondent :

" After receiving Braille Gospels for a blind person a country minister wrote : ' If you could have heard our blind lady reading the Scriptures, your heart would have been as mine was, overjoyed. The pleasure she received is beyond telling.' "

This is but one story among—how many hundreds of others ? Let us take it as a symbol of the task which still lies ahead of us.

In Memoriam

THE previous issue of the *Bulletin* had just gone out when we received the news of the death of Sir Gilbert Hogg, who had been one of the first Vice-chairmen of the United Bible Societies. The following notice has been prepared for us by the N.B.S.S. :

GILBERT PITCAIRN HOGG

During its long history, the National Bible Society of Scotland has had many fine Chairmen and Vice-Presidents : but none possessed more sterling character than Sir Gilbert Hogg, who died near Glasgow on 15th April, 1950.

Sir Gilbert spent himself in the service of India, occupying many important positions, including that of Chief Secretary to the Governor of Bengal, an onerous task in very difficult years, and before retiring he acted for a time as Governor of Assam. All who had contact with him during his years in India testified to his kind and considerate attitude to all who approached him, as well as to the high principles which he upheld at all times.

While in India he gave abundant evidence of his interest in the Christian cause and did what he could to assist the work of the churches and missionary societies. This interest received further expression during his years of retirement, and the activities of the Bible Societies became one of his special concerns. As Director, then in succeeding years as Vice-Chairman, Chairman and Vice-President, he played a conspicuous part in guiding and developing the policies of the National Bible Society of Scotland. His interest extended beyond the boundaries of Scotland, however, for he was one of those responsible for the setting up of the United Bible Societies and for the shaping of its constitution, taking his place round the conference table at Elfinsward, Amersfoort and Dunblane, and serving as Vice-Chairman on the last two occasions.

Now, like John R. Temple, his companion at these gatherings he has been called to the fuller service of his Lord. He will be remembered with affection by all his friends. We thank God for all he was enabled to accomplish, and pray that succeeding generations may never lack men of his stamp, ready to follow the Master in every detail of the daily round as well as in the broader principles of life and conduct.

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